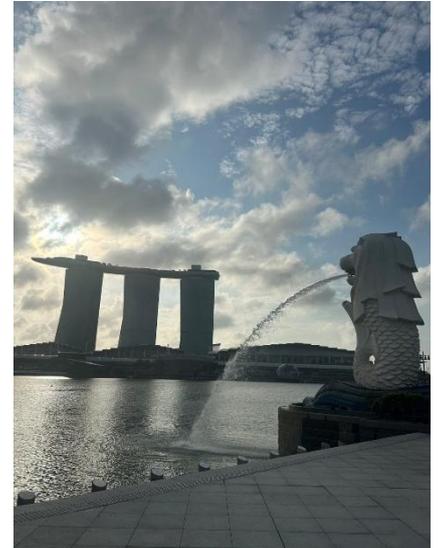


CAMPUS Asia Social Innovation Field Study in Singapore AY2025

While going through the 4 days program, my impression on Singapore had completely changed. It was not only a multi-cultural but also a highly INCLUSIVE country.

Our first day in Singapore started from the Merlion park. From our guide, we learned that some famous Singaporean building derives of its colonial era, which lasted for 150 years. After that, we had a short stay at Little India and had a look around Indian stalls, where flowers were hanged a lot.

Next, we visited the Dignity Kitchen. It was a place where people with disabilities (PWD) were hired and cook meals for people, just like the usual hawker center, a food court. It was not a social welfare service, but a social enterprise that earns money based on market mechanism. There, we listened to speech by a woman, who is a General Supervisor, and Mr. Koh Seng Choon, the Founder of the



Inside the Dignity Kitchen: staff's portraits are on the wall, with the year they started to work at the place.



Mr. Koh Seng Choon with the trophy of "THE SINGAPOREAN OF THE YEAR 2024".

Dignity Kitchen. I found two key learnings from their speeches, one is to find people that do understand and follow when you eager to do something, the other is to make the place not only for someone but for everyone. Mr. Koh told us that the most important thing in starting social enterprise is to find our fellow. Having read a book written by a

Japanese woman who owns social enterprise in Japan, I agreed to his opinion. Running a business cannot be done alone, especially if we want to make a big impact on society with it. An organization gets stronger as the members will do match. And he also told us that the place also works as a place for local elderly to gather. During our visit, 28 local elderly came to celebrate the Chinese New Year. In my opinion, if the place becomes an important place for citizens, they would be strong supporters to keep the place running even if they face a difficult situation. Additionally, that would connect people in the same place, which means fill in the gap between the disabled and others. I consider not making the place special for limited people, but for everyone, can be the key to doing social enterprise. We learned some easy sign language used in Singapore and had our lunch there, while using the language to order some drink. It was a precious

opportunity that I could learn how different Japanese and English sign language are.

Following that, we went through Orchard area and had some time at Arab Street. We could find many middle east cuisine restaurants there, which reminded me of cultural diversity of the country. After this, we headed to our hotel which is located close to this place, and our first day group study ended.



Wall Painting of Dignity Kitchen: this kind of aesthetic wall painting is often seen in Singapore.



My meal at Dignity Kitchen: Nasi Lemak with Chicken (Left), Iced Lime Juice (Top Right), Ondeh Ondeh Cake (Bottom Right).

On day 2, we visited Nanyang Technology University (NTU). We had 2 lectures, and in-between campus tour guided by NTU students. Our first lecture was conducted by Professor Yeow Fwee Chua, who teaches economics there. We learned how market and people's expectation correlate, and how we can expect market movement. From the lecture, I learned that the market does behavior unexpectedly when people act disorderly or factors, which were not paid attention to, give too much impact on it.

After this lecture, we had about 2 hours campus tour with NTU students. The campus was so huge that we couldn't explore the entire area, but we still could visit five spots,

Chinese Heritage Centre, Yunnan Garden, Wee Cho Yaw Plaza, The Hive and NTU official goods store for students. Each building or place has different atmosphere and functions

Followingly, we had our second lecture by Dr. Lot, who already retired from NTU, about Sook Ching. Sook Ching was a massacre contaminated by Japanese Empire, targeted at anti-Japanese Singaporean at that time. It was an untaught historical fact at Japanese mandatory education curriculum, and we learned how cruel Japanese armies were, and what they left on survivors' both physically and mentally.

From the lecture, I learned 2 things I must do when I face historical facts. First, we must understand what our ancestors and Empire Japan had done to the locals is not what we do right now. Misunderstanding this fact could lead to extra conflict or disguise the fact as our government does now. Second, we must learn what Empire Japan army had done as predators during the WW II. In history class under high school, we mostly learn how Japan loses their power and suffered from attacks, for instance ground combat on Okinawa, bombing of Tokyo, and the atomic bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Despite these facts had told us how tragic the war was, they also gave us the impression that Japan is a victim nation. The fact is Japan was BOTH victim and aggressor nation.

The lecture from Dr. Lot told us how war can change people's minds and behavior, especially focusing on predators. We should find out what drove the soldiers to such atrocities and find a way to prevent recurring of that. The astonishing fact Dr. Lit told me was that this fact has been taught less at school. He made a guess that it's due to the government's fear for the effect on trade with Japan. However, as mentioned earlier, the past and present should be recognized separately, and so as history and economy.



On day 3, we visited Singapore City Gallery at Maxwell. The gallery exhibits the history of Singapore and what the country aims today. I could see how strategically Singapore had developed after the WW II and how the present government tries to improve the society by automating. In addition, there were several exhibits that foster citizen



involvement, which I guess had enabled Singapore to be a culturally diverse country. I learned that the government's endless challenge to strengthen the country and citizen's high motivation in building the society is the key to Singapore's marvelous development, which continues today.

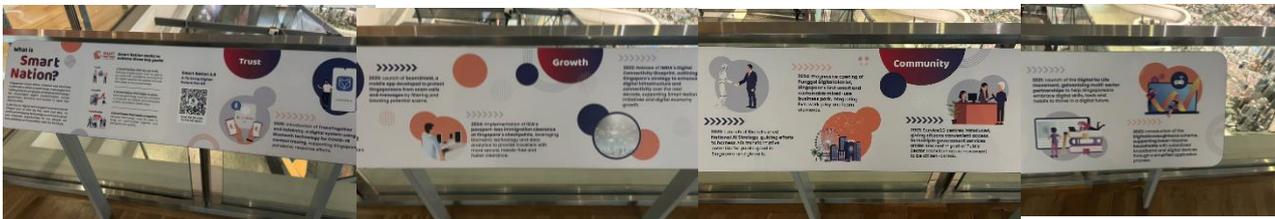
My personal research focused on how Singapore introduces digital in society amid facing the aging society without emerging digital divide. I had an impression that Singapore is more digital-centered country than Japan, especially for citizen's daily life. To conduct research, I visited MRT stations and shops such as supermarkets, and took buses. From visiting those places and City Gallery, I found that there is one key points that enable Singapore to foster digital-centered life to citizens, which was the generous support at shops by staff. When I went to register, there were 8 self-registers with 1 assistant staff. She stayed around the area and supported customers purchasing. In my opinion, Japanese shops do not usually allocate specialized staff even they introduce



self-registers, for instance convenience stores. And although some supermarkets do, the staff mostly serve as observers, not as assistants. In Singapore, although the system seemed to have been introduced for certain time, they kept offering supports. I consider, continued support to users is one of the keys to success in fostering digitalization in society. Moreover, this strong support is provided by the government as well. From

City Gallery display, I found that the government has encouraged digital transformation

in various ways. One thing I notice that that of Singapore might be different from Japanese is the purpose of public class for seniors. As my opinion, Japanese public class regarding with digital tools are often held in a room, as a passive-style lesson. They usually sit and listen to a teacher's explanation and follow as she does. It does let seniors feel unattractive with their mobile phone, just recognize it as new style of old phones they used before. Meanwhile, similar kind of classes in Singapore introduced on Digital for Life website, which is a Singapore governmental campaign, was held outside, and taught seniors some daily hacks with their phones, such as how to take pictures professionally, and provided the time to try it as a group. I consider this is the way to foster seniors to get used to the tools while enjoying, and heighten their motivation towards using digital tools. Of course, some local authorities in Japan might do similar activities as well, I consider this way of supporting should be conducted countrywide as well.



To conclude, my personal learning from Singapore field study led to the importance of strong support in fostering digital transformation, and conducting active learning is the key to prevent digital divide between digital natives and seniors.

Lastly, I would like to thank CAMPUS Asia office for offering such a valuable and informative opportunity to us, and teachers and staffs for arranged and helped us with everything through the program. I am so honored to be a participant in this program, and I will make use of this experience in coming year's study.